

Today's News - Friday, April 12, 2013

- A rather contentious news day, beginning with MoMA's decision to demolish its neighbor: Cramer says the American Folk Art Museum "must be saved. What's at risk is not only a magnificent work by important contemporary architects, but MoMA's credibility as a champion of architecture."
- Rosenbaum, on the other hand, explains why its demise "was not only predictable but probably necessary" ("its failed interior" is "unworthy of saving," though the "sculptural bronze façade might have merited preservation").
- Williams and Tsien weigh in: MoMA's decision runs "contrary to the principles of sustainability, and to the museum's own mission of celebrating and preserving modern and contemporary art, including architecture and design."
- More on the debate (and "uproar") re: Make It Right's (and others) work in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward: "they have at least shown that it is a neighborhood worth rebuilding, that environmental and social justice is still a priority."
- Saffron can barely suffer a set-back for "a much-praised skyscraper design" on Philly's waterfront - all because of "a very lucrative billboard" (just when you think you've heard it all).
- Murray explains (and takes pride in) how the Scott Brown petition drive began: "Can history be rewritten? No, but we can, and must, close this chapter" (as of this morning, over 8,000 have signed - if you haven't already, please do).
- Rafi Segal urges architects to boycott the soon-to-be re-launched Israeli National Library competition, while embroiled in a "design ownership row" of his own re: his original winning design.
- Some big-name architects call on Souto de Moura to boycott \$100,000 Israeli Wolf Prize (he's ignored their plea).
- Enough gloom and doom: Bingler offers a lovely reflection on his time as a student working with Soleri: "his drum had a distinctly different beat."
- One we couldn't resist (it made us smile out loud): Green reports on a Montreal firm that designs musical environments/events that "totally change the character of public spaces, getting people to have fun" (great videos!).
- Weekend diversions:
- Quirk cheers SEEDoc's latest documentary spotlighting MASS Design Group's hospital in Rwanda (and is a bit sad that it's the last in the series).
- Lifson is lifted by "Pacific Standard Time" and Lubell and Goldin's "Never Built: Los Angeles": "Seeing the city's built and unbuilt legacy together, the sheer, overwhelming optimism of 20th-century Los Angeles comes to the fore."
- "Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life" at the Vancouver Art Gallery "challenges visitors to consider the ways that the hotel has both reflected and been an agent of social and cultural change."
- Inspired by Cantrill and Thalis, "Public Sydney: stop, look, live!" at the Museum of Sydney "reveals stories about city's best loved public spaces" + Holm gives thumbs-up to "Public Sydney: Drawing the City" by Thalis and Cantrill: it "sets a new benchmark for navigating the historic layers of Sydney's original CBD - a celebration of the public Sydney we often take for granted."
- "Archizines" traveling show goes Down Under to the Object: Australian Design Centre.
- Travis can't recommend Englander's "High Tide on Main Street" more highly: a "terrific" book that "explains once and for all why we can't prepare for sea level rise like we do for other disasters, when things slowly return to normal - sea level rise is permanent."
- Pedersen's lively Q&A with Brook re: "A History of Future Cities": it's "a kind of cautionary tale for today's world and a helpful reminder that this phenomenon is not entirely new."
- Lamster x 2 re: Lambert's "Building Seagram": it is "a unique hybrid that is at once a work of the highest architectural scholarship, a memoir, and an argument for civic responsibility." + An excerpt from the book, where Lambert begins: "What led

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The Day That MoMA Died: Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects' American Folk Art Museum must be saved: What's at risk is not only a magnificent work by important contemporary architects, but MoMA's credibility as a champion of architecture. By Ned Cramer - Architect Magazine

Demolition Decision: American Folk Art Museum's Former Building Gets MoMA-ized: I regard its failed interior as unworthy of saving, although its distinctive (if somewhat forbidding) sculptural bronze façade...might have merited preservation. By Lee Rosenbaum -- Tod Williams Billie Tsien [links]- ArtsJournal

MoMA Tear-Down: Architects Blast Museum Plan to Raze Former Folk-Art Home: Tod Williams and Billie Tsien said the museum's decision ran contrary to the principles of sustainability, and to the museum's own mission of celebrating and preserving modern and contemporary art, including architecture and design.- Wall Street Journal

The Debate Over Making It Right in the Lower Ninth Ward: ...an uproar, defending Make It Right's efforts at rebuilding...it has been unable to reach out to the elements that revitalize a neighborhood - amenities...[It] and its many counterparts have at least shown that it is a neighborhood worth rebuilding, that environmental and social justice is still a priority, and that despite the struggle it is worth the effort. By Irina Vinnitskaya -- Lydia DePillis; Martin C Pederson [images, links]- ArchDaily

A billboard puts Philly apartment tower on hold: Tall towers frequently get ensnared in politics...But the forces that have delayed the construction of a much-praised skyscraper design are of a different sort entirely...a very lucrative billboard..developers offered a redesign to preserve views of the billboards. By Inga Saffron -- Peter Gluck and Partners [now GLUCK+] [images]- Philadelphia Inquirer

It all started with our interview with Denise Scott Brown: "We need her side of the story on the Pritzker Prize," I said, as we made arrangements to film [her for] our Women in Architecture luncheon...Little did we know the story would inspire...a petition...Can history be rewritten? No, but we can, and must, close this chapter. By Christine Murray- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Boycott library contest, says Rafi Segal: Israeli architect ousted from scheme urges practices to avoid replacement competition to build National Library following design ownership row. [images]- The Architects' Journal (UK)

Eduardo Souto de Moura ignores pleas from leading architects to boycott \$100,000 Israeli Wolf Prize: ...despite being urged to boycott it...Will Alsop, Eva Jiricna, Ted Cullinan, Charles Jencks, Neave Brown, Kate Macintosh and Bob Giles signed a letter from the pressure group Architects and Planners for Justice in Palestine which asked [him] to turn down the prize.- BD/Building Design (UK)

A Great Tree Has Fallen: For some, Paolo Soleri was the perfect iconoclast. For me, in 1975, as a young intern architect, he was an ideal mentor...his drum had a distinctly different beat...an uncompromising search for that special sweet spot, where seemingly different ideas morph elegantly into a single, systemic whole. By Steven Bingler/Concordia- Metropolis Magazine

Music for the Masses: Daily Tous les Jours creates wonderful multi-disciplinary media projects...the idea is to harness mass participation to create one-of-a-kind musical events...they also totally change the character of public spaces, getting people to have fun. By Jared Green [images, videos]- The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

SEEDoc: Nyanza Maternity Hospital / MASS Design Group: ...the Design Corps and SEED (Social Economic Environmental Design)'s series of mini-documentaries that highlight the stories of award-winning public interest design projects...the final seed-doc has just been released. By Vanessa Quirk [images, links]- ArchDaily

Dreams Unfulfilled: Architecture shows in Los Angeles examine the city that is, and the one that might have been: "Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A." exhibition series and "Never Built: Los Angeles" by Sam Lubell and Greg Goldin...Seeing the city's built and unbuilt legacy together, the sheer, overwhelming optimism of 20th-century Los Angeles comes to the fore. May these exhibitions spark more of it. By Edward Lifson [images]- Metropolis Magazine

"Grand Hotel: Redesigning Modern Life" at the Vancouver Art Gallery: ...a groundbreaking exhibition exploring the impact of the hotel as one of the pre-eminent architectural and social structures of our time...challenges visitors to consider the ways that the hotel has both reflected and been an agent of social and cultural change...- Canadian Architect

Architectural anecdotes inspire Sydney Museum's new show: Inspired by local architects Peter John Cantrill and Philip Thalis, the Museum of Sydney has launched a new exhibition which reveals stories about Sydney's best loved public spaces..."Public Sydney: stop, look, live!"- Architecture & Design (Australia)

"Public Sydney: Drawing the City" by Philip Thalis and Peter John Cantrill sets a new benchmark for navigating the historic layers of Sydney's original CBD..While the book records static built form, it is optimistic in acknowledging change will continue to enrich our urban experience. It is a celebration of the public Sydney we often take for granted. By David Holm/Cox Architecture- ArchitectureAU (Australia)

New exhibition reveals underground architecture: "Archizines"...showcases architecture fanzines, journals and magazines from around the world that provide an alternative to the established architectural press...transforms the gallery floor of Object: Australian Design Centre into a fully recyclable reading room – a temporary library made entirely from recyclable materials.- Architecture & Design (Australia)

"High Tide on Main Street: Rising Sea Level and the Coming Coastal Crisis" by John Englander: ...dispels the myths while acknowledging the uncertainties...explains once and for all why we can't prepare for sea level rise like we do for other disasters...when things slowly return to normal...sea level rise is permanent...terrific book for anyone who is trying to come to grips with sea level rise... By Will Travis - Deep Green Design Alliance/dgda

Q&A: Daniel Brook: The author and urbanist has a fascinating new book..."A History of Future Cities"...examines three historic "instant" cities—Mumbai (Bombay), Shanghai, and St. Petersburg—along with that over-the-top 21st century newcomer, Dubai...smart take works on two levels—as a kind of cautionary tale for today's world and a helpful reminder that this phenomenon is not entirely new. By Martin C. Pedersen- Metropolis Magazine

A Personal Stamp on the Skyline: "Building Seagram" by Phyllis Lambert reveals many new details about a building that remains among the most studied of the modern era. By Mark Lamster -- Mies van der Rohe; Philip Johnson, - New York Times

The Story of Seagram: ..."Building Seagram" by Phyllis Lambert...a unique hybrid that is at once a work of the highest architectural scholarship, a memoir, and an argument for civic responsibility. By Mark Lamster- Design Observer

Seagram: Union of Building and Landscape: What led Mies to create the union of skyscraper and plaza on Park Avenue, a binding together so profoundly important in his oeuvre? In the 1950s, it would have been difficult to answer, let alone to ask. By Phyllis Lambert (excerpt from "Building Seagram") -- Mies van der Rohe; Philip Johnson [images]- Design Observer

Sambuchi Architects: Rokko Shidare Observatory, Kobe, Japan

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